

Ser. No. 09/986,598
Amendment

REMARKS

As a result of the amendments, cancellations and additions with regards to the claims, the Examiner is requested to consider currently pending Claims 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9 and 10. Claim 2 has been canceled by this amendment. Claims 5 and 8 were previously canceled. Claims 1 and 6 have been amended. Claim 1 has been amended by adding the limitation of the original Claim 2, which has been cancelled, and removing a non-essential limitation. Claim 6 has been amended to correct a typographical error noted in the previous amendment. No new matter has been added by these amendments or new claims.

The Examiner had noted that Claims 6, 7, 9, and 10 were allowed and that Claim 2 would be allowed if rewritten in independent form. Instead of rewriting Claim 2, applicants have taken the limitation from Claim 2 and added it to Claim 1. Further, to avoid a double patenting rejection between amended Claim 1 and Claim 6, applicants have removed the non-essential limitation that the first longitudinal length is greater than the second longitudinal length. Even removing this non-essential limitation, amended Claim 1 still conforms with the reasons noted for allowable subject matter in the Office Action.

Moreover, Claims 3 and 4 depend from Claim 1 and would be allowable because they depend from an allowed claim. Therefore, the rejections under 35 USC 102 and 35 USC 103 are mooted by this amendment.

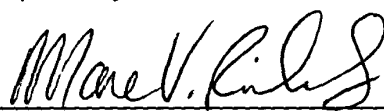
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Conclusion

In view of the foregoing amendment and remarks, Applicants respectfully assert that the rejection is rendered moot or overcome and the claims are in condition for allowance. Should there be any matters of a formal nature to be clarified, please call the undersigned attorney in order to expedite allowance of this application.

Respectfully submitted,

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Marc V. Richards
Reg. No. 37,921
Attorney for Applicants

BRINKS HOFER GILSON & LIONE
P. O. Box 10395
Chicago, Illinois 60610
(312) 321-4200